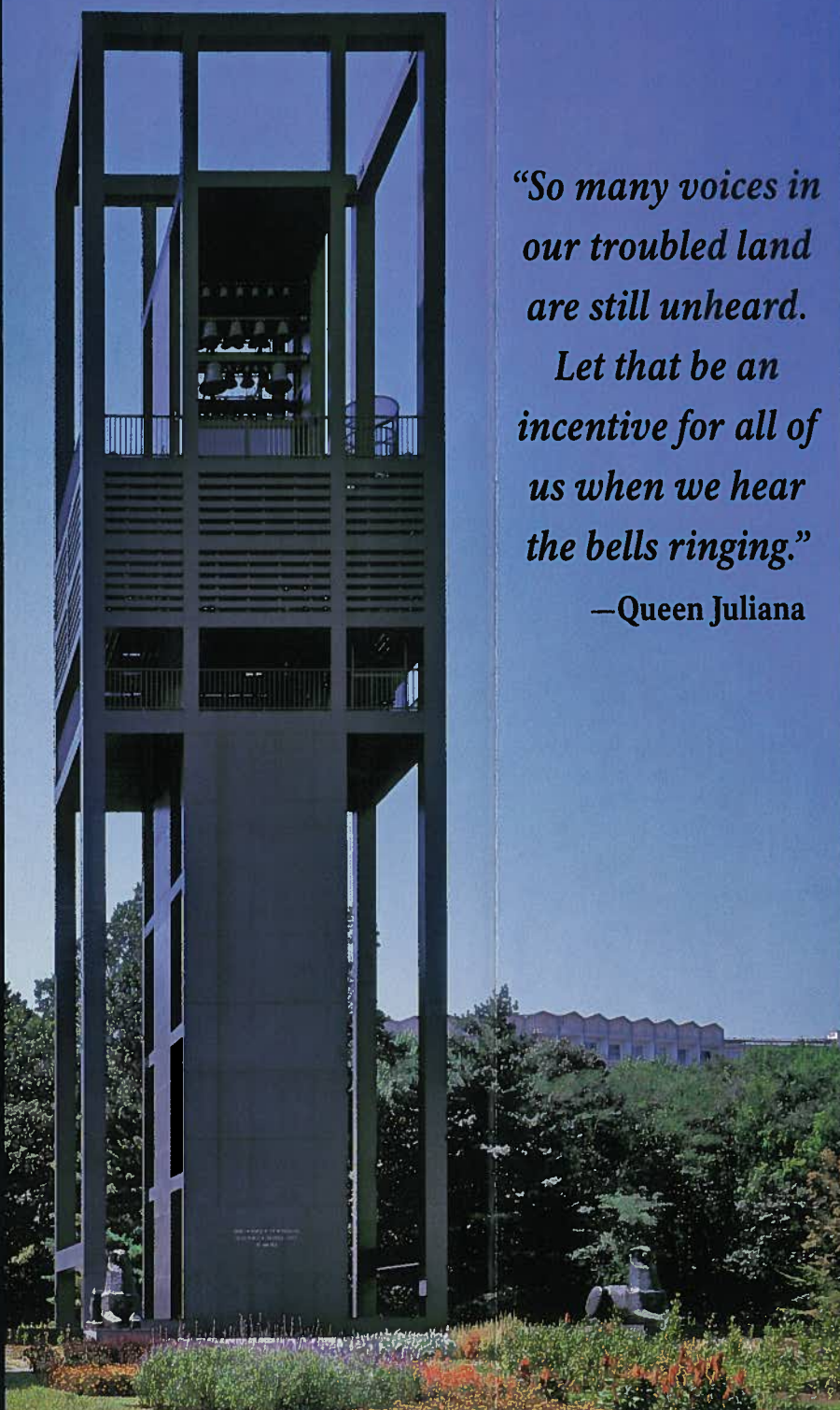


Netherlands Carillon

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
George Washington
Memorial Parkway
District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia



*"So many voices in
our troubled land
are still unheard.
Let that be an
incentive for all of
us when we hear
the bells ringing."
—Queen Juliana*



Queen Juliana and President Harry S. Truman during her 1952 visit.

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A Gift of Friendship

Near the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial stands a large bell tower, the Netherlands Carillon. This was a gift "From the People of the Netherlands to the People of the United States" in gratitude for American aid during and after World War II. The carillon symbolizes and is dedicated to the friendship between two countries and their common allegiance to the principles of freedom, justice, and democracy.

The idea for this symbolic gift came from a Dutch government official. Endorsed by Queen Juliana, the concept and the drive for funds to build the carillon and tower met with generous response from all sections of the Netherlands. On



Each bell carries an emblem and verse signifying a group within Dutch society.

April 4, 1952, during a visit to the United States, Queen Juliana presented a small silver bell to President Truman as a token of the carillon to come.

First installed at a nearby site in 1954, the tower and 49-bell carillon were moved to their present location in 1960. Dutch- and American-sponsored renovations were completed in 1995. A 50th bell was dedicated on May 5 of that year, on the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands from the Nazis.

Design and Construction

The 50-bell carillon is cast from a bronze alloy of about four-fifths copper and one-fifth tin. Its total weight is 61,438 pounds. The largest bell, or bourdon, is six feet, nine inches in diameter and weighs 12,654 pounds; the smallest bell, or treble, is eight inches in diameter and weighs 35 pounds. Each bell carries an emblem, as well as a verse by Dutch poet Ben van Eysselsteijn. The smallest bells, for example, contain verses about youth.



COVER © GARDNER HIGSMITH
PANORAMA © JOHN SKOWRONSKI



Edward M. Nassor, volunteer carillon director, performs on-site.

The tower housing the carillon, designed by leading Dutch architect Joost W. C. Boks, is an open steel structure reinforced by steel plates. It is approximately 27 feet high, 25 feet deep, and 6 feet wide, and stands on a quartzite plaza 93 feet square. The plaza is enclosed by a low lava stone wall. Two bronze lions designed by Dutch sculptor Paul Koning guard the plaza steps. A rectangular staircase leads to an observatory platform. From there a small circular staircase winds up to the glass-enclosed playing cabin 13 feet above the ground.

Operation of the Carillon
The carillon is tuned to the chromatic scale. Its 50 bells give it two notes more than four octaves. In the playing cabin are the wooden levers and pedals of the clavier. These connect directly to the movable inner clappers of the stationary hanging bells, permitting the carillonneur to achieve a full musical expression. Eighteen bells of the Netherlands Carillon are programmed to play a medley of songs by computer at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. each day.

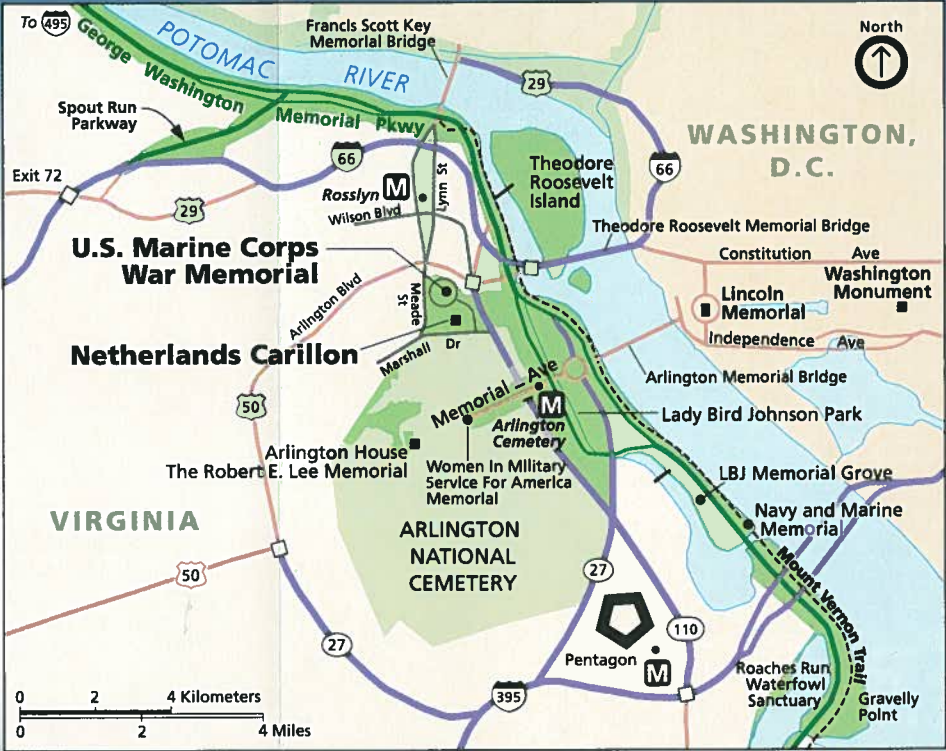
About Your Visit

The United States Marine Corps War Memorial and Netherlands Carillon are administered by George Washington Memorial Parkway. They are located in Virginia along the northern edge of Arlington National Cemetery, across from major monuments and memorials in Washington, D.C. Both are accessible via Rosslyn and Arlington Cemetery Metro stops, as well as via U.S. 50 and I-66.

Visitors may attend free concerts by trained carillonneurs on Saturdays from May through September. In May, September, and on national holidays, concerts are held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. From June through August, concerts are held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Safety Note: Persons with cardiac or respiratory conditions should use caution when climbing the 135 tower steps. Small children must be closely supervised by an adult.

George Washington Memorial Parkway is part of the National Park System. To learn more about parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.



For More Information
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101
703-289-2500
www.nps.gov/gwmp



Tulips, a national symbol of the Netherlands, bloom each year in a spectacular spring display in front of the carillon. Afterwards, some 5,400 other flowers are planted annually in the beds surrounding the memorial. Please refrain from picking the flowers so others may enjoy them.

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